1: Longrigg
645, 175 ●

MH1 Iraq MH1

[For the rise and fall of various ministries, their policies and internal politics from 1900 to 1950 in Iraq, see category 116, entire source.]

1: Longrigg G-4, 5 (ca. 1915-1940) MH1 Iraq MH1

175 'Iraq's place in the Empire was determined by various factors Its remoteness, its non-Turkish inhabitants, its fierce climate were all considerations which made service in it the dread of most Turkish officials; and little was in practice contributed to correct this ill repute by the prestige and past glories of Baghdad, its history of struggles with Persian armies, its almost successful attempts to secede. The progress which Turkish culture had made in some 'Iraqi circles detracted little from the Arab character which it shared equally with the backward provinces of the Hijaz, the Yaman, and North Africa, and with those, more sophisticated, of the Levant. The whole block of Arab territory exceeded in area the rest of Turkey, possessed great cultural solidarity, and differed from the Turkish dominions in race and history, in language, social atmosphere, and manners. And as the Arab provinces in general, so 'Iraq in particular brought the Sultan's Government into touch with foreign issues of particular delicacy. The Caliph could not disinterest himself in the loyalty of a race which controlled the Holy Cities of the Hijaz, the Shi'i shrines of the Euphrates, the tomb of the Sunni saint 'Abd al-Qadir al-Gaylani (Jilani): who spoke the unique language of Islam and, inhabiting its lands of origin, must control much of its living sentiment in Islamic countries. To this realization, as well as to mere vainglory, were due the ceaseless efforts of the Turks to complete what in the end they never achieved, the conquest of Arabia: a conquest which on the Red Sea coasts, in al-Aḥsā and 'Uman and later in Najd, finally eluded them after weary and weakening aggressive efforts, of which 'Iraqis had been and were to be the spectators. The sight did nothing to diminish the abiding mutual antipathy which in general marked the attitudes of Turk and Arab.

The 'Iraq wilayas, viewed with however scanty favour, were yet held as vital to the Caliph's position. Beyond their fame in Islamic history and religion, they had another claim. From these most neglected and remote of provinces came stories of vast potential riches and the expectation of important future development. In the later years of the century not only foreign travellers and diplomats but Turks at the Sublime Porte itself, and incoming Walis hot for progress, spoke of railways, canal schemes, minerals, extended river navigation, bridges, and town-planning. Such designs had not advanced in 1900 beyond the stage of idle speculation or vaguest project; the impediments of sheer poverty, governmental ignorance, and pervading insecurity had prevented realization of any part of the schemes. But they existed still, in diwan and coffee-shop, and gained for 'Iraq a measure of interest and respect.

To Europeans the country had for a century past become

6: Ireland MH1 Iraq MH1

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/For a history of Iraq under British occupation and administration from 1914 to 1920, a review of events leading to the establishment of a constitutional monarchy and of the evolution of political institutions and social conditions in Iraq from 1925 to 1932, see category 116, entire source./

3cRoyal Institute of International Affairs U-4 (no date)1954 M1 Middle East
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(c) *Jews*

Until recently Iraq contained a large community of Jews whose families had been settled in the country for hundreds or even thousands of years. They lived mostly in the large towns, especially Baghdad, in whose economic life they played an important part as merchants, financiers, manufacturers, and members of the professions. There were also Kurdish-speaking Jews in the north, mostly urban traders and craftsmen but also rural cultivators. A law of 1931 gave Jewish communities self-government in their own affairs, and there was a highly organized communal life, with schools, hospitals, and charitable institutions. In consequence of events in Palestine the majority of Jews left Iraq in 1950–1, mostly for Israel.

(d) *Yazidis*

These are vulgarly known as 'devil-worshippers' but, although their religion includes the propitiation of Satan, it might more justly be described as an amalgam of Christian, Muslim, and Magian elements. They are divided between Jebel Sinjar and the Shaikhan district north of Mosul, speak a Kurdish dialect, except in their rites, where Arabic is used, and are probably of Kurdish origin.

(e) *Sabians*

('Baptists'), also called the Mandaeans and the 'Christians of St John'; their religion combines elements of various origins and periods. Most of them are craftsmen—especially silversmiths—in the large towns.

(f) *Shabak*

Of Kurdish origin, who live in the area of the Yazidis and are not clearly distinguished from them; their religion contains Yazidi and extreme Shii elements.

(g) *Other Sects*

Include Bahais, Sarlis, Kakais, Qizilbashis, none of them of any political significance.

Political History

Written history began in Iraq at the end of the fourth millennium B.C., but archaeological remains from much earlier periods, first in the north and later also in the south, give evidence of palaeolithic man, of agricultural neolithic man and, from the sixth and fifth millennia, of increasing human progress expressed successively in extensive agriculture, copper

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175 and bronze work, wheeled vehicles, the potter's wheel, the sailing ship, bricks, temples, writing, seals, and sculpture of considerable maturity. Fully evolved urban life and written records appear before 3000 B.C., with the emergence in southern Iraqi city-states of the magnificent Sumerian civilization, the first highly developed culture in the world. It was absorbed and transformed by the first historical Semitic immigration, that of the Akkadians (c. 2400), who united the country into a single kingdom and extended it by foreign conquest. The unity, destroyed by tribal incursions from the East, was re-established for two centuries under the hegemony of Ur of the Chaldees, to be disrupted again, at the beginning of the second millennium, by a further invasion, of Elamites and Semitic Amorites, from which, in the eighteenth century, arose the Babylon of Hammurabi. Babylon, under various dynasties, absorbed and was itself modified by incursions of Hittites and Hurrians from the north and west and Kassites from the east, and in 745 B.C. fell to the Semitic Power of Assyria, which, expanding during the ninth and eighth centuries from a local city-state in the north, came to dominate the whole riverland and for a time controlled most of the Middle East. Assyria itself fell in 612 B.C. to the combination of a revived Babylon and the new Power of Media; and the neo-Babylonian empire—that of Nebuchadnezzar and 'Balthazar'—was overcome in 539 B.C. by Cyrus, the founder of the first of the three great Persian dynasties, which, during the next thousand years, extended westward over Iraq. The first, the Achaemenian, was overthrown by Alexander the Great, whose Seleucid successors continued to dispute Iraq with the second great dynasty, the Parthian, after it had evicted them; these fell in turn to the Sasanians, who, like their predecessors, warred with Imperial Rome from their capital at Ctesiphon.

In the seventh century A.D. the preaching of Mohammed provided an inspiration which temporarily united the tribes of Arabia; their campaigns immediately after the Prophet's death overthrew the Sasanian Empire and reduced the Syrian and Egyptian provinces of the East Roman (Byzantine) Empire. The Umayyad family, who soon afterwards constituted themselves the Prophet's successors—Caliphs—in leadership of the Muslim community, made Damascus the centre of a fast-expanding Arab, though only nominally Muslim, empire which, by the centenary of the Prophet's death, extended from Central Asia to beyond the Pyrenees. In A.D. 750 the Syrian-based Umayyads were supplanted by the related Abbasid family, which drew its support from Iraq and farther east and in 762 founded a

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new capital at Baghdad. During the 500 years of their Caliphate the area of Arab conquest became a religious and cultural unity in which Baghdad held an eminent, at times pre-eminent position; the material authority of the Abbasids, however, despite increased centralization and standardization of government, rapidly dwindled, as province after province fell to invaders, adventurers, or local princes and the central power was sapped in dynastic quarrels and the disputes of the powerful palace guard. From the tenth century A.D. the Caliph was little more than a religious figurehead under the temporal protection of successive Turkish dynasties, holding insecurely only part of an economically declining Iraq. In 1258 Baghdad was destroyed in a Mongol invasion and the Abbasid dynasty, long shorn of imperial power, was overthrown. The Mongol ravages intensified the ruinous aftermath of centuries of invasion and internal strife, and the country was subsequently despoiled and fought over by Turkomans and Tatars, then disputed by the Persian and Ottoman Empires, each exploiting the internal religious division between Sunni and Shii Muslims and the opportunism of frontier Kurds. In 1638 Iraq, although still open to Persian invasion, fell finally to the Turks and remained a province, or provinces, of the Ottoman Empire until the First World War.

Modern Iraq

In November 1914 the Allied Powers, provoked by a Turkish attack on Russian sea ports, declared war on Turkey and an Indian Army brigade landed in Iraq. The purpose of this force, rapidly strengthened, was to implement the long-established Anglo-Indian policy of maintaining the Persian Gulf and the vilayets of Basra and Baghdad as outposts of India, to combat the possibility of a German-encouraged Turco-Arab *jihad*, with its likely effect on India, and to protect the already important oilfields of south-western Persia.

In 1916 the Allies had provided for the post-war status of the Mesopotamian provinces of the Ottoman Empire in two incompatible agreements: first, that of Sir Henry McMahon and the Sharif Hussain, which (though with vague reservations as to French and British interests) accorded independence to the Arab portions of them; this was confirmed by Allied propaganda, General Maude's Baghdad proclamation of 19 March 1917, the Anglo-French Declaration of 8 November 1918, and President Wilson's Fourteen Points; second, the Sykes–Picot Agreement of 16 May 1916, by which Britain was to obtain southern Mesopotamia with Baghdad and, as a sphere of in-

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175 fluence under Arab rule, the zone between this area and the province of Mosul; the latter was to fall in the French sphere of interest but was included by the Clemenceau–Lloyd George Agreement of December 1918 in the British sphere in exchange for French participation in the north Mesopotamian oil deposits.

British official opinion was divided in its policy towards Iraq. The civil administration in Iraq was for long uncertain whether Iraq, including even the Mosul area, might not be annexed and come under direct rule of the Indian pattern. In the interest of imperial security and administrative efficiency they distrusted the Arab nationalism which had inspired the Arab Revolt in the west. The Arab Bureau in Cairo, on the other hand, favoured Hashimi rule of the Arab provinces of the Ottoman Empire. The British Government, beset by conflicting advice and embarrassed by its war-time agreements, attempted, through the agency of the administration in the country, to sound Iraqi opinion on the most acceptable form of control.

With the consequent delay in making a definite pronouncement of policy and with practical indications that the administration on the spot was preparing for British rule rather than for Iraqi independence, there was considerable discontent among Iraqi nationalists and pan-Arabists, who consisted chiefly of educated townsmen. Resentment was fanned by Turkish propaganda and by the fiercely enthusiastic Iraqi officers serving with Amir Faisal ibn Hussain in Syria and aggravated by the war-time measures of a foreign, non-Muslim administration. These weighed particularly heavily on the tribal and landowning rural population, especially the Shii tribes of the Middle and Lower Euphrates, who, self-interested rather than strongly nationalist, were assailed by the propaganda of the urban nationalists and the Shii divines of the Holy Cities. The assignment of the Mandate for Iraq to Great Britain at San Remo in 1920 and an attempt at tribal disarmament were followed by disturbances which, in July of that year, developed into an insurrection which, while it left large areas of the country unaffected, required considerable forces to suppress it. It was not completely suppressed till early 1921; but by October 1920 Sir Percy Cox, the first High Commissioner under the mandatory system, had terminated military rule and established an Arab Council of State advised by British officials.

642 By March 1921 the Amir Faisal ibn Hussain, expelled from
648 Damascus by the French the previous year, agreed at the instance of the British Government to accept the throne of Iraq;